

October 2016



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## Michigan FSA Newsletter

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To find contact information for  
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### State Director's Note

Michigan FSA welcomed FSA Administrator Val Dolcini for his first visit to Michigan during his tenure as administrator.

Administrator Dolcini began his Michigan visit at Almar Orchard, in Flushing, where he discussed high intensity organic fruit production using specialty varieties with Michigan farmer, Jim Koan (above).

The visit concluded in Flint with a working group of new-and-beginning and historically underserved farmers discussing the challenges in local food systems and urban agriculture and how FSA can best support their efforts.

Administrator Dolcini describes Michigan as a microcosm of what he sees in agriculture across the nation. Since Michigan boasts such a diverse agricultural economy, we certainly agree.

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## Just Around the Corner

**Nov. 1: ELAP application deadline and deadline to report fiscal year 2016 losses**

**Nov. 7: County Office Committee election ballots mailed to producers in Local Administrative Areas up for election**

**Nov. 15: Certification Deadline for 2017 fall-seeded small grains (including wheat) and perennial forage**

**Nov. 20: NAP Application Sales Closing Date for 2017 NAP perennial crops**

**Dec. 1: NAP Application Sales closing date for Honey and Maple Sap**

**Dec. 5: County Office Committee election ballots due**

**Dec. 16: MPP deadline to register or make calendar year 2017 election**

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## USDA Reminds Producers of Nov. 1 ELAP Application Deadline

Eligible livestock, honeybee, and farm-raised fish producers who experienced losses due to disease, adverse weather or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires, not covered by other agricultural disaster assistance programs, have until Nov. 1, 2016, to submit an application and notice of loss under the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP).

Eligible livestock losses include grazing losses not covered under the Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), loss of purchased feed and/or mechanically harvested feed due to an eligible adverse weather event, additional cost of transporting water because of an eligible drought and additional cost associated with gathering livestock to treat for cattle tick fever.

Eligible honeybee losses include loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event, cost of additional feed purchased above normal quantities due to an eligible adverse weather condition, colony losses in excess of normal mortality due to an eligible weather event or loss condition, including CCD, and hive losses due to eligible adverse weather.

Eligible farm-raised fish losses include death losses in excess of normal mortality and/or loss of purchased feed due to an eligible adverse weather event.

Producers who suffer eligible livestock, honeybee, or farm-raised fish losses from October 1, 2015 to September 30, 2016 must file:

- A notice of loss the earlier of 30 calendar days of when the loss is apparent or by November 1, 2016
- An application for payment by November 1, 2016

The Farm Bill caps ELAP disaster funding at \$20 million per federal fiscal year.

The following ELAP Fact Sheets (by topic) are available online:

- ELAP for Farm-Raised Fish Fact Sheet
- ELAP for Livestock Fact Sheet
- ELAP for Honeybees Fact Sheet

To view these and other FSA program fact sheets, visit the FSA fact sheet web page at [www.fsa.usda.gov/factsheets](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/factsheets).

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## USDA Extends Margin Protection Program for Dairy Enrollment Deadline

USDA announced that it will extend the deadline for dairy producers to enroll in the Margin Protection Program (MPP) for Dairy to Dec. 16, 2016, from the previous deadline of Sept. 30. This voluntary dairy safety net program, established

by the 2014 Farm Bill, provides financial assistance to participating dairy producers when the margin – the difference between the price of milk and feed costs – falls below the coverage level selected by the producer. A USDA web tool, available at [www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/mpptool), allows dairy producers to calculate levels of coverage available from MPP based on price projections.

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## Direct Loans

FSA offers direct farm ownership and direct farm operating Loans to producers who want to establish, maintain or strengthen their farm or ranch. FSA loan officers process, approve and service direct loans.

Direct farm operating loans can be used to purchase livestock and feed, farm equipment, fuel, farm chemicals, insurance and other costs including family living expenses. Operating loans can also be used to finance minor improvements or repairs to buildings and to refinance some farm-related debts, excluding real estate.

Direct farm ownership loans can be used to purchase farmland, enlarge an existing farm, construct and repair buildings, and to make farm improvements.

The maximum loan amount for both direct farm ownership and operating loans is \$300,000 and a down payment is not required. Repayment terms vary depending on the type of loan, collateral and the producer's ability to repay the loan. Operating loans are normally repaid within seven years and farm ownership loans are not to exceed 40 years.

Please contact your local FSA office for more information or to apply for a direct farm ownership or operating loan.

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## Breaking New Ground

Agricultural producers are reminded to consult with FSA and NRCS before breaking out new ground for production purposes, as doing so without prior authorization may put a producer's federal farm program benefits in jeopardy. This is especially true for land that must meet Highly Erodible Land (HEL) and Wetland Conservation (WC) provisions.

Producers with HEL determined soils are required to apply tillage, crop residue, and rotational requirements as specified in their conservation plan.

Producers should notify FSA as a first point of contact prior to conducting land clearing or drainage type projects to ensure the proposed actions meet compliance criteria, such as clearing any trees to create new cropland; then these areas will need to be reviewed to ensure such work will not risk your eligibility for benefits.

Landowners and operators complete the form AD-1026 - Highly Erodible Land Conservation (HELC) and Wetland Conservation (WC) Certification to identify the proposed action and allow FSA to determine whether a referral to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for further review is necessary.

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## October Interest Rates

3-year	0.875%
5-year	1.125%
7-year FSFL	1.500%
10-year FSFL	1.625%
12-year FSFL	1.750%
Crop Year 2016 MAL	1.625%

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